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26 September 1975

MEMORANDUM FOR: General Rumney

SUBJECT: Imagery Tasking Problems by the User

During discussions with staff members of EUCOM/USAFE/USAREUR/NAVEUR/COMSIXTHFLT, several identical problem areas surfaced at each command. Some of these problem areas were briefly covered in my Memorandum for the Record of 23 September 1975; however, since discussions at each command gravitated to the same problem areas, additional detail is warranted. The staff personnel involved in my discussions were senior representatives from the Operations Branch and Plans Branch, as well as the Intelligence Branch, of each command.

TASK PROCEDURES FOR NATIONAL SYSTEMS

1. Though it was realized that firm management must be maintained over national systems to ensure the most effective utilization is made of limited resources, the long-lead-time required for validation of a user's requirement is sometimes unacceptable. An event or unusual activity detected by other means that requires imagery may be of short duration (24-48 hours). Normally, a routine non-crisis requirement takes several days to reach the tasking authority and the event has terminated. A recent example was the arrival of a high-interest merchant ship at Bengasi, Libya, with a deck load of MIG-23 aircraft. (Since Libya is a denied area for air breathing reconnaissance vehicles, coverage was available only from space platforms.) If the MIG-23 aircraft were unloaded, the threat from that area would be substantially increased. The apparently simple solution to view the ship when it sailed into international waters from Libya is not valid, for this particular ship is a large-hatch cargo ship. Cargo

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from below decks could have been off-loaded and the MIG-23 aircraft relocated below decks. As merchant ships remain in a port as short a period as possible, the time available for imaging is critical. Even though the obtained image [] would not be received by a user for days or even weeks, the intelligence derived would be valuable to a tactical commander from both the intelligence and planning aspects.

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2. The requirement to image this target was not considered of sufficient urgency to warrant crisis tasking under present guidelines. The requirement is time sensitive in that the target would be active in off-loading for a short period of time.

3. The chain of command or tasking route is a DoD problem which is beyond the DCI's purview. The effective use of a national system and providing current intelligence to the national level is within the DCI's purview. A confirmation that the MIG-23 aircraft were or were not off-loaded in Libya is but a small piece of intelligence; however, this information, when correlated with other all-source data, could play an important part in the Middle East balance of power.

4. There probably are many instances where initial tip-off of unusual activity or an unusual event will be emanated from a commander on the scene. The tasking procedures now in existence do not appear flexible enough to respond to national interests of this nature. How to diplomatically approach this problem with the DoD is extremely difficult. Initially, I plan a discussion with the DoD COMIREX member, [] unless there is some objection.

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5. Another problem area that appears minimal to the Washington level is the format required for levying a requirement. All commands stated that 90% of the data required to complete the request format is already in the Washington computer data base. The operators in the field, particularly with a tactical commander, are normally rushed and under staffed. For example, there are only three officers and three enlisted men providing intelligence support directly to the Commander, Sixth Fleet. The recommendation from USAFE on how to improve the format was to delete all the encyclopedic data that is already in the computer except for one item so the computer could easily produce the remaining data (i. e., the BE number if there is one).

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6. Also, there should be some provision for the "remarks" section of the request to have an impact on the collection. If three airfields are requested, they should be imaged on the same pass for I&W. However, when the request finally reaches the platform mission programmers, the three airfields show as three separate targets with no relationship. Two may be targetted on one mission, and the remaining airfield targetted several hours (or days) later, thus losing the main purpose of the requirement.



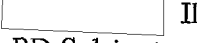
7. The format and administrative handling of a requirement does affect the efficiency and effectiveness of a national system, and this problem should be looked at by the IC Staff in conjunction with USIB-COMIREX. If time can be saved administratively and not impact on the system, progress is made. There may be a logical reason for the lengthy format. The DCI can establish some credibility with the tactical commander by at least answering his question on why such a format! Initially, I plan a discussion with Mr. Roland Inlow, Chairman of the COMIREX, unless there is some objection.



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